

ST. HELENS MIST

FOUNDED 1881

Issued Every Friday By
THE MIST PUBLISHING COMPANY
M. E. Miller, Editor

Entered as second class matter, January 10th, 1912
at the Post Office at Saint Helens, Oregon, under the
Act of March 3rd, 1879

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

One Year \$1.50
Six Months75
Advertising rates made known on application
Legal notices 25 cents per line.

THE COUNTY OFFICIAL PAPER

WAS AN INJUSTICE DONE?

The Mist has been taken to task for daring to comment editorially on an interview as published in the Portland Journal purporting to have come from Judge Clark of this county. The editorial appeared in the last issue of the Mist. In connection with the article below which is taken from the Journal of recent date we ask that the editorial of the Mist be read and if a mistake was made or any injustice done to Judge Clark by commenting on same, then we are anxious to make necessary amends. The two articles speak for themselves. In the Journal article, however, and under the same heading, a part of the article which bears the big heading that "Judge Clark comes to the defense of State Highway Engineer," follows a rehash of the recent recall election and the controversy between the old Court and the Highway Engineer, and which a great majority of people of this county took as a part of the defense made by Judge Clark. However that portion of it is denied by Judge Clark as having been made by him, which we are ready to accept as being the facts but when these statements were published in the news item which was headed as above stated, it was the most natural thing in the world for readers to interpret the whole thing as one piece.

But leaving out all that portion except the quoted parts of Judge Clark, we give the article as it appeared in the Journal, head and all.

JUDGE CLARK COMES TO THE DEFENSE OF STATE HIGHWAY ENGINEER.

League Making Attack on Bowlby Not Representative of County, It is Asserted.

DOCUMENTS SIGNIFICANT.

Opponents to Bonding Plan Said to Live in Upper End of Columbia County.

"In connection with the criticism of State Highway Engineer H. L. Bowlby, contained in resolutions passed a few days ago by the Columbia County Taxpayers' League, County Judge Clark, of that county, says that the league is not representative of the people of that county and is chiefly composed of those in the upper end of the county who opposed bonding the county for road improvement.

"In an interview Judge Clark flatly denied the reports as published by several leading papers of the state last Tuesday, to the effect that resolutions were adopted last Tuesday, at the budget meeting at St. Helens, to dispense with the services of Engineer Bowlby.

"While the resolutions were read before the budget meeting," said he, "there was no motion made for its acceptance or rejection, and I cannot see why such erroneous reports were furnished to the papers unless it was to give Engineer Bowlby and the state highway commission a slap. The resolution in question," continued Judge Clark, "was not made out to the county court, or to the budget meeting, but was made to and adopted by the Columbia Taxpayers' League at their last meeting in St. Helens."

Opposed to Issue.

"The Columbia County Taxpayers' League is composed chiefly of those people in the upper part of Columbia County who opposed the bond issue, and they are not by any means representative of the people of the county.

"It is the general opinion of the people of the lower part of the county that if the state highway engineer would have run the Columbia River highway through St. Helens instead of Houlton, Bowlby and the commission would not have been criticised for their work.

"Documents and reports on file are insignificant in comparison with the magnitude of the work."

There is the interview of Judge Clark. Get out your copy of last week's Mist and compare the editorial with this interview. That's all we ask.

Judge Clark has stated that he came to St. Helens after his election with a determination to bury sectional feelings, and try, by his conduct in the affairs of the office, to patch up whatever sectional feeling there might be. There can be no doubt but that the Judge is earnestly trying to do this. So are many other people, not only at Rainier but also in this section of the county. No person or agency is more desirous of bringing about peaceful and harmonious relations between the different localities of the county than is the Mist. In the interview given out by Judge Clark he was not promoting that feeling but rather rekindling the old fire of discord and it was for that reason that the Mist commented on it as it did.

No doubt some of the other papers of the county will jump all over the Mist this week for that editorial. We are expecting it in the light of events of the past few days. We are anticipating it. But after all is said and the readers of the various papers of the county read the article as printed in the Journal and then read the Mist of last week, we are willing

to take the judgment of the fair minded citizens of the county as to whether or not an injustice was done to Judge Clark.

A STRONG DELEGATION.

Multnomah County with twelve representatives in the House, has only secured the Speakership, and ten of the most important Committee Chairmanships. The other member of the delegation had the temerity to vote for another man than Ben Selling for Speaker and he was therefore classed as a country member. It has been freely predicted through the state that Multnomah County would run the legislative machine in the House this session and those predictions appear to have been well founded. It is quite probable that this state of affairs was anticipated when the candidates were selected by Multnomah County. There is no denying the fact that the personnel of the Multnomah Representatives is a very strong one. Some of the most successful business men and politicians of the state are among the delegation. Multnomah County is not represented by just an ordinary bunch of men this time as it has been for several sessions, but it has a delegation which has already proven its efficiency by capturing every thing in sight and being in absolute control of the House.

But coming down to brass tacks this state of affairs may not turn out to be so bad after all. While it is apparent that the big county will control legislation in the House, it is also quite apparent that such legislation as they do control will be good legislation. When a delegation of twelve men of the character and standing of those twelve Multnomah Representatives get control of legislative machinery it is not likely that anything very vicious or bad will be foisted upon the people. They are men who have been successful in business and are very much interested in securing good laws and reducing the taxpayers' burdens, and while they all come from one county their work will doubtless prove satisfactory to the people of the state at large.

It is not to be understood that they are the only members of the House who are good legislators for there are no doubt many others, but the fact that they are so thoroughly organized and have such a complete understanding and with such a considerable number of them, together with the fact that they have the active support of quite a number of other men from various sections of the state, puts them in the position of dictators, and from the way things start out they are going to do some dictating too.

SIGNIFICANT

It is now quite evident that several thousand dollars of the road money was wasted under the direction of the State Highway Engineer. There is ample proof of this fact without resorting to figures submitted by that officer or without having to take the word of any man or paper. All it requires is to make a visit to the railroad track about two miles below Clatskanie and see where the beautiful dry masonry walls along the side of the hill as ordered by the State Highway Engineer, have slid down the hill on to the railroad track for a distance of several hundred feet. And now comes the railroad company with the request, or rather demand, that all that portion of the dry masonry that did not slip down the hill with the first rains, be torn down in order to protect the property of the railroad company and the lives of its employees and passengers.

When this gigantic blunder is called to the attention of the Highway Engineer he will perhaps pass it off with a remark similar to the one he made when he was accused of incompetency; that it was insignificant when compared to the magnitude of the work. So many of these proofs of incompetency and extravagance on the part of the Highway Engineer are coming to light each succeeding day that even Major Bowlby will have to take notice of some of them as being significant, before long.

HORROR OF HORRORS.

Very likely a considerable amount of criticism will be directed at the County Court for the purchase of a Ford automobile to be used by the Roadmaster and Court in traveling over the county. But a careful consideration cannot help but reveal the fact that it will be economy instead of a burden. The use of one of these handy and reliable cars by the officials will result in the saving of many dollars in expense, such as railroad fares, auto hire and like items. A careful account of the use of the Ford for the year will be kept, and at the end of that time we predict it will show a saving to the county.

But, horror of horrors, the Court has violated its oath to support the constitution of the United States, in the purchase of this automobile. IT DID NOT ADVERTISE FOR BIDS BEFORE PURCHASING SAME.

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